



**Board of Selectmen**

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**TOWN OF ACTON**

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April 27, 2009

The Honorable Congresswoman  
Niki Tsongas  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1607 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Tsongas,

The Acton Board of Selectmen supports the nomination and solicits your assistance in designating the partially completed Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) as a High Priority Project. We hope you will agree that the BFRT is a deserving project for this special consideration.

The BFRT enjoys wide support in our community and in the region. Construction is almost completed on the first phase coming out of Lowell to Route 225 in Westford. Phase 2 covers about 8 miles from Route 225 through the rest of Westford, and through Carlisle, Acton and Concord to Powder Mill Road near the Sudbury town line. In West Concord, the BFRT links to the Fitchburg Commuter Rail. The extension of the BFRT through Sudbury into Framingham is in an earlier design stage.

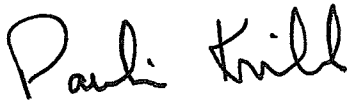
Acton, Concord, Carlisle, and Westford with more than \$520,000 in local funds have advanced the engineering design for Phase 2 to the MassHighway 25% completion standard. The four towns are awaiting favorable action by the State on their enhancement funding application to complete the final design. As you know, such amount of local funding is very significant given the many competing demands. Yet, the voters in the four towns have more than once and overwhelmingly supported the BFRT in Town Meeting votes and budget appropriations.

The State is committed to the BFRT, demonstrated most notably with the appointment of senior level project coordination staff by MassHighway Commissioner

Paiewonski. The State owns the former railroad right-of-way, and the Executive Office of Transportation has indicated a readiness to grant an easement or long term lease. The Route 2 crossing of the BFRT is incorporated into the State's Route 2 Rotary reconstruction project.

As our Country's focus is now on the greening of energy and transportation, investments in public infrastructure should demonstrate sustainability and contribute to a reduction in the human carbon footprint. Accordingly, we believe that good governing should result in this rail trail project receiving a High Priority status so that its completion can be expedited. The Board of Selectmen ask for your assistance in this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paulina Knibbe". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Paulina" and last name "Knibbe" clearly distinguishable.

Paulina Knibbe, Chair  
Board of Selectmen  
Town of Acton